United Nations A/69/874

General Assembly

Distr.: General
24 April 2015

Original: English

Sixty-ninth session
Agenda items 52 and 148

Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Fifth annual progress report on the implementation of the global field support strategy

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

I. Introduction

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the fifth annual progress report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the global field support strategy, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/269 (A/69/651), concluding with written responses provided on 17 March 2015. The fifth progress report provides high-level information on the implementation and future direction of the global field support strategy and should be read in conjunction with annexes I and II to the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/69/751). The Committee also had before it, for information, the report of the Board of Auditors on peacekeeping operations for the period ended 30 June 2014 containing its observations and recommendations on the implementation of the global field support strategy (A/69/5 (Vol. II), paras. 252-359).

2. Other reports currently before the General Assembly also contain information and proposals related to the implementation of the global field support strategy, including the reports of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy (A/69/585; A/69/733/Rev.1) and on the client missions of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, Uganda, comprising the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) (A/69/620; A/69/797), the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) (A/69/549; A/69/808), the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA) (A/69/611 and Corr.1; A/69/740), the United

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Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) (A/69/677; A/69/800) and the United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia (UNSOA) (A/69/592; A/69/728).

II. General observations and recommendations

3. The global field support strategy was proposed by the Secretary-General in 2010 with a five-year implementation horizon to transform service delivery to field missions and address the numerous challenges facing United Nations peacekeeping operations, drawing on the lessons learned over several decades of operational experience (A/64/633). The goals of the strategy were to enable timelier mission start-up and deployment, as well as to improve quality, efficiency and economy of scale in the delivery of services to field missions, including through the provision of common services. It was proposed that the strategy would be delivered through four implementation pillars in the following key field support areas: (a) financial framework and strategic resourcing; (b) human resources; (c) shared services (service centres); and (d) supply chain management and modularization.

4. In its resolution 64/269, the General Assembly noted the overall concept of the global field support strategy and provided guidance on its implementation. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit an annual progress report as recommended in paragraph 159 of the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/64/660). In addition to the Secretary-General's annual progress reports on the implementation of the global field support strategy and the related reports of the Advisory Committee, the Board of Auditors provides its observations and recommendations on progress made in its annual report on the financial statements of the United Nations peacekeeping operations. An audit of the implementation of the global field support strategy was conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in 2011 (see A/66/714).

5. Pursuant to a request made by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/264, in his third progress report the Secretary-General presented a first iteration of his end-state vision for the global field support strategy and indicated that the Secretariat had finalized a implementation plan for activities to be completed by 30 June 2015, at the end of the five-year implementation period of the strategy (A/67/633). Subsequently, in response to a recommendation of the Board of Auditors, the Secretary-General provided in his fourth progress report a refined end-state vision for the strategy and a performance framework for each of the strategy's pillars (A/68/637 and Corr.1; and A/68/731, annexes I and II). In that report, the Secretary-General indicated that the global field support strategy would end, as planned, in mid-2015 and the Organization would not seek an extension. Future performance improvement in field support would however be fully mainstreamed into the ongoing work of the Department of Field Support.

6. The current progress report is therefore the final progress report on the implementation of the global field support strategy. The Secretary-General proposes to present reporting on future improvements in field support in his annual report on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations. The Secretary-General also indicates that his next overview report will contain more detailed reporting on benefits and performance in the implementation of the four pillars of the global field support strategy (see A/69/651, para. 2).

7. The Secretary-General indicates that his fifth progress report assesses achievements and lessons learned during the implementation of the global field support strategy, and also outlines the future approach for the continuous strengthening of United Nations field support beyond 2015. Further information on the implementation of the strategy is provided in the report of the Secretary-General on the overview of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/69/751): annex I provides details on the implementation of each pillar of the global field support strategy during the 2013/14 period, including performance results against the global field support strategy pillar end states and benefits reporting; annex II provides consolidated information on the financial and human resources provided by client missions to the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, as requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 65/289.

8. In chapter II of its report on the financial statements of peacekeeping operations for the period ended 30 June 2014 (A/69/5 (Vol. II)), the Board of Auditors provides its assessment of the status of progress made towards the end-state vision of the global field support strategy to be achieved by 30 June 2015 and the realization of operational and financial benefits that are expected to accrue to the United Nations peacekeeping operations. A summary of the progress made under each pillar of the global field support strategy during 2013/14, including key activities and main areas of progress, is provided in table II.13 of the Board's report. The Board is of the view that progress should have been greater than was actually achieved, and that achievement of the end-state vision and key performance indicators by June 2015 is at risk. It recommends that the Secretariat take the steps necessary to ensure that the activities planned under the global field support strategy are completed by June 2015 so that the end-state vision and key performance indicators are fully achieved. The Board also highlights delays in developing the post-strategy implementation plans, tools and policies.

9. The Secretary-General states that not all achievements in each pillar will have been realized by June 2015 and that these will be pursued as priority tasks during 2015/16. In parallel, a major objective for 2015/16 will be the successful mainstreaming of the completed tools, structures and approaches of the global field support strategy into the ongoing work of the Secretariat. While noting the Secretariat's position that 30 June 2015 should not be regarded as the final deadline for implementation of changes, goals, tools and principles of the global field support strategy, the Board emphasizes the need to set target dates for activities related to global field support strategy mainstreaming and forward planning to ensure that the change process would continue. The Advisory Committee concurs with the Board in this regard.

10. **Accordingly, the Advisory Committee requests the Secretary-General to make every effort to fully implement the activities envisaged under the implementation plan. Given that in his next overview report the Secretary-General will report on progress achieved in the final year of the implementation of the global field support strategy (see para. 6 above), the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request him to provide for consideration at its seventieth session comprehensive information on the progress made towards the achievement of the end-state vision of the global field support strategy under all the pillars. The performance report should also identify and provide explanation on the targets that were not**

achieved and provide information on any plans for the implementation of those targets in the post-global field support strategy period.

11. **The Advisory Committee stresses the need to establish, at the five-year mark of this major initiative, a clear record of the goals, achievements and lessons learned as well as the costs incurred and benefits accrued. Such a record should be provided to the General Assembly not only for assessment of the implementation of the strategy, but also to facilitate the Assembly's consideration of future proposals related to the mainstreaming of the global field support strategy, as well as of other related initiatives such as the global service delivery model and the implementation of the United Nations information and communications technology strategy, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/262.**

12. In his report the Secretary-General outlines an approach for the future direction of field support and makes a series of proposals for consideration by the General Assembly. The Assembly is requested (a) to approve the establishment of a special account in support of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe and agree that a separate budget be presented for the Centre; and (b) to endorse the refinements to the standardized funding model for its future use in the start-up of new peacekeeping operations (A/69/651, para. 53). In addition, the Secretary-General presents a proposal for a second shared service centre (ibid., paras. 29-38). Upon enquiry the Advisory Committee was informed that the Secretary-General seeks General Assembly guidance on next steps or a decision on the options proposed. The Advisory Committee discusses these proposals under the relevant sections below.

Relationship with other management initiatives

13. Over the five-year implementation period of the global field support strategy, the Secretariat has been engaged in the concurrent implementation of a number of major interrelated and mutually supportive business transformation and change management initiatives. These include (a) the transition to International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS), which, inter alia, required valuation and accounting of all global assets including those located in peacekeeping operations; (b) the deployment of an enterprise resource planning system for the United Nations, the first phase of which, Umoja Foundation, covering mainly IPSAS-related requirements, was piloted and implemented in peacekeeping operations in 2013; and (c) the deployment of a talent management system, Inspira, for workforce planning, staff selection and recruitment, performance management, learning and career development. Furthermore, implementation of the remaining phases of Umoja — Extensions 1 and 2 — which encompass human resources management and travel, and some of the more complex processes such as budget formulation, supply chain management and planning and programming functions, is ongoing and planned to be completed in 2018 (see General Assembly resolution 67/246, sect. III, paras. 25-26; see also A/67/360).

14. In addition, over the past years the General Assembly has approved a series of human resources proposals put forward by the Secretary-General which have affected peacekeeping personnel, in particular, the harmonization of the contractual arrangements and conditions of service of United Nations staff across the entire Secretariat. The General Assembly has also approved proposals made by the International Civil Service Commission for the common designation of family and

non-family duty stations across the United Nations common system, additional hardship allowance for staff serving in non-family duty stations, and an entitlement for rest and recuperation travel of field staff (General Assembly resolutions 63/250, 65/247 and 65/248).

15. More recent or upcoming proposals that are also related to the provision of support and service delivery matters include (a) the adoption of an information and communications technology strategy for the United Nations by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/262, in which the Assembly acknowledged the importance of the strong central leadership of the Chief Information Technology Officer for the overall direction and performance of information and communications technology activities, and requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to reduce the level of fragmentation of the current information and communications technology environment across the Secretariat and at all duty stations and field missions, and to provide detailed information for the implementation of the strategy for consideration at its seventieth session; and (b) the submission of a report by the Secretary-General containing his proposals for a global service delivery model for consideration by the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

16. The Advisory Committee notes that most of these initiatives are applicable Secretariat-wide, and that their successful implementation will require a holistic approach with close coordination among all Secretariat departments, offices and field missions. **The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that any proposals put forward regarding future field support and service delivery improvements be well integrated and coordinated with all other related Secretariat reform initiatives in a manner that reinforces and multiplies their respective benefits, and avoids any duplication, wasteful use of resources and fragmentation of capacities. The Committee further emphasizes the need to ensure that the lessons learned during the implementation of the global field support strategy are fully understood across the Secretariat and incorporated in the upcoming proposals for the global service delivery model, as appropriate.**

17. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee considers that the implementation of Umoja — a unified, common and integrated system for the management of the financial, human and physical resources of the entire United Nations Secretariat, including field missions — creates opportunities for further integration and consolidation of service delivery. For instance, services such as education grant processing which are provided to all Secretariat staff could be provided centrally from a common service centre for United Nations staff at all duty stations.

III. Observations and recommendations on individual pillars of the global field support strategy

A. Strategic resourcing and financial framework pillar

18. Information on the end-state and performance indicators for the strategic resourcing and financial framework pillar as well as on the progress made towards 2015 end-state achievements is provided in the Secretary-General's overview report on peacekeeping operations (A/69/751, annex I, paras. 4-9). A total of five key performance indicators have been identified, of which two have already been

achieved. The performance indicators relate to (a) the percentage of peacekeeping missions receiving access to pre-mandate commitment authority; (b) the number of days between adoption of a Security Council resolution and approval of immediate funding and staffing arrangements; (c) IPSAS compliant financial reporting; (d) efficiencies and cost reductions achieved through planned measures; and (e) increasing resource implementation rates.

19. With regard to the achievement of efficiencies and cost reductions, the Secretary-General indicates that the annual reduction in average cost per uniformed personnel is 2 per cent between 2012/13 and 2013/14 and that a 1 per cent annual reduction in average cost is targeted by June 2015 (see A/69/751, table A.1). In the fifth progress report (A/69/651, paras. 12 (c) and (d)), the Secretary-General indicates that, over the five-year implementation period of the global field support strategy, field support has become leaner, from an average of 136 support and security staff for every 1,000 mission personnel in 2010/11 to fewer than 122 in 2013/14, and that field support operations are more cost-effective, the budgeted annual operational costs of United Nations peacekeeping having decreased by 10 per cent or $250 million from a total of $2.52 billion in support of 113,600 authorized uniformed personnel in 2010/11.

20. **While recognizing that the above-mentioned indicators reflect a straight average, the Advisory Committee is of the view that efforts should be pursued to further analyse the data with a view to gaining a better understanding of the underlying cost structure and factors influencing the evolution of support costs. The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to continue to refine his analysis with a view to establishing a clear definition and baseline for field support costs and developing a model for the scalability of support resources, which could be applied to the support account for peacekeeping operations, the Global Service Centre and the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe.** The Advisory Committee discusses scalability issues further in paragraphs 49 to 51 below.

Standardized funding model

21. In his fifth progress report (A/69/651, para. 53), the Secretary-General requests the General Assembly to endorse the refinements to the standardized funding model for its future use in the start-up of new peacekeeping operations, recalling paragraph 78 of the third annual progress report on the global field support strategy (A/67/633).

22. The Advisory Committee recalls that, in his first report on the global field support strategy, the Secretary-General indicated that the standardized funding model was intended to reflect a more homogeneous approach to operational support requirements, in particular in the early stages of a mission, when the deployment of resources is limited by what can be achieved initially (A/64/633, paras. 49-50).[1] Subsequently, the Secretary-General proposed (see A/65/696 and Corr.1) a

[1] Background information on the main elements of the standardized funding model is contained in annex III to the Advisory Committee's report on the budget for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan for the period from 1 July 2011 to 30 June 2012 (A/66/592). An indicative timeline for the application of a standardized funding model to fund a new peacekeeping mission is shown in annex V to the Advisory Committee's report on the global field support strategy (A/64/660).

standardized funding model comprising six different levels of funding and staffing based on combinations of the number of authorized uniformed personnel (5,000, 10,000 or 15,000) and the area of operation and logistical challenges of the mission. He also proposed a timeline for the application of the standardized funding model to fund a new peacekeeping mission involving the following steps: (a) submission for concurrence by the Advisory Committee of an initial request for commitment authority within 30 days of mandate authorization; (b) submission for consideration by the General Assembly within 30 to 90 days of the establishment of the mission of an initial budget proposal prepared on the basis of the standardized funding model for the balance of the financial period of the first year of operation of the mission, taking into account the activities that could reasonably be accomplished during the period; and (c) submission of full budget proposals and performance reports in subsequent periods, based on existing procedures. By its resolution 66/264, the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to apply the standardized funding model in the formulation of the initial budget of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

23. The standardized funding model was first applied to the start-up of UNMISS for the 2011/12 financial period (see A/66/532). The Advisory Committee did not consider UNMISS to be an adequate case to use to reliably assess the effectiveness of the standardized funding model approach to budget formulation in view of the Mission's absorption of assets, financial resources and personnel from the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (see A/66/592, para. 33).

24. In his subsequent progress report reflecting the first application of the standardized funding model, the Secretary-General stated that the standardized funding model was a successful tool because it had achieved a budget implementation rate of 99.9 per cent (see A/67/633, paras. 34-39). In its related report, the Advisory Committee expressed its view that the model's effectiveness cannot be properly assessed on the basis of the overall budget implementation rate alone, which is not an indicator of the efficient utilization of the resources provided or of the accuracy of the budgetary assumptions (A/67/780/Add.17, para. 11). In this connection, the Committee is of the view that a more useful and informative indicator might have been the implementation rate by category of expenditure. The Board of Auditors (A/67/5 (Vol. II)) also expressed a number of reservations on the first application of the model to UNMISS, noting that the frequent and widespread redeployments between groups and classes of expenditure (reflecting almost 70 per cent of the approved budget) were significantly higher in number than those for other missions during the first year of operations and that there were weaknesses in the monitoring and control of resource utilization in applying the standardized funding model at UNMISS. The Board also noted deficiencies in both the assumptions and the budget methodology underpinning the standardized funding model as well as in the application of the model. In his third report on the implementation of the global field support strategy (A/67/633), the Secretary-General proposed to revise the standardized funding model including through the incorporation of updated costs, and by implementing the technical observations of the Board of Auditors.

25. At the time of its consideration of the start-up budget for UNMISS for 2011/12 the Advisory Committee was informed that UNISFA, which was established almost concurrently with UNMISS, was not large enough to constitute a suitable fit under the mission profiles defined for the standardized funding model (see A/66/592, para. 28). In its cross-cutting report on peacekeeping operations (A/66/718) the Committee

expressed its view that the modalities of any such model should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate a wide range of operational requirements and conditions. The Committee further questioned whether the design of the model, limited to six profile/scenario combinations with an overall level of funding for each combination, might be too restrictive and therefore limit the application of the model to a narrow range of "typical" start-up operations.

26. The revised standardized funding model, including lessons learned, was applied for the second time to the start-up of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) (see A/68/538; see also para. 24 above), as authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/286. In its related report (A/68/653) the Advisory Committee noted that the application of the revised standardized funding model had not resulted in a more streamlined budgetary process or in the timely submission of a proposed budget, which was submitted almost six months after the establishment of the Mission after two previous requests for financing arrangements through authorization to enter into commitments. The Committee further observed that the model might not be able to incorporate all relevant parameters, such as support provided by regional service centres or resource requirements for naval transportation. Even though such requirements were known at the time of the preparation of the budget, the application of the standardized funding model precluded their inclusion in the cost estimates of the Mission, requiring reallocation of funds within the total funding envelope. At the time of the preparation of the Advisory Committee's present report, the budget performance report for MINUSMA for the 2013/14 period had not been issued and the Committee was not able to assess actual performance against the budgeted amounts.

27. The Advisory Committee recalls that the standardized funding model was not applied to the start-up budget of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). Following approval of two proposals for interim financing arrangements through commitment authority, a full budget proposal for 2014/15 was submitted by the Secretary-General on 31 October 2014, some 3.5 months after establishment of the Mission (A/69/557). The Advisory Committee was informed that the budget estimates had been prepared on the basis of high-level planning parameters for the Mission and with regard to typical structures for peacekeeping missions and past experience, and that the resulting estimates were similar in many ways to those that would have been generated if the standardized funding model had been applied. However, the resource requirements took into account the specific parameters of MINUSCA, such as actual and planned deployment schedules for uniformed and civilian personnel and aircraft, supported by underlying prices, unit costs and estimates.

28. To date the standardized funding model has been applied to the start-up of UNMISS and MINUSMA. **The Advisory Committee believes that in both cases the model proved to lack sufficient flexibility to adapt to the particular circumstances of the mission or take into account its known requirements at the time of the preparation of the budget proposals. Furthermore, the application of the model did not result in the submission of a budget within 30 to 90 days of the start-up or reduce the number of requests for interim financing arrangements. In the case of UNMISS, as noted above, the overall budget allocated was fully implemented, but with redeployments between groups and classes of expenditure totalling almost 70 per cent of the approved resources. At the same time, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the experience**

gained in developing a standardized approach to the start-up of missions, in analysing and refining cost parameters, and identifying the initial resources required to meet the urgent and achievable needs of field missions during the start-up period provides valuable lessons learned for the future. The Committee also considers that efforts should continue to analyse and standardize cost parameters with a view to facilitating the formulation of future start-up budgets as well as enhancing transparency and the cost-effective use of resources.

29. The Advisory Committee recalls that at the time of its consideration of the proposed budget for MINUSCA for 2014/15 (A/69/641) it had been informed that the resource requirements took into account the specific inputs for MINUSCA, including actual and planned deployment schedules for uniformed and civilian personnel, and aircraft, supported by underlying prices, unit costs and estimates, and were based on historical expenditure patterns and deployment patterns of recent start-up missions. **While noting the need to continue the efforts undertaken during the development of the funding model to analyse and standardize cost parameters (see para. 28 above), the Committee is of the view nevertheless that the approach taken in preparing the start-up budget of MINUSCA, which takes into account the specificities of the actual and planned deployment schedules of personnel and resources of each start-up mission, could constitute a more flexible and adaptable solution than the standardized funding model. Furthermore, the Committee notes that the above approach allowed timely submission of an initial budget for the establishment of MINUSCA and can be applied in the context of the existing budget process through which peacekeeping budgets are formulated, considered and approved. In view of the foregoing, the Advisory Committee sees no need for further development of the standardized funding model and recommends against endorsement of the refinements to the standardized funding model.**

B. Supply chain management and modularization

Supply chain management

30. Information on supply chain management is provided in the fifth progress report (A/69/651, paras. 39-47). The end-state and performance indicators for the supply chain management and modularization pillar, as well as information on the progress made towards 2015 end-state achievements, are provided in the Secretary-General's overview report on peacekeeping operations (A/69/751, annex I, paras. 17-23).

31. The Advisory Committee recalls that in his third annual progress report on the implementation of the global field support strategy (A/67/633) the Secretary-General indicated that in August 2012 the Department of Field Support had commenced a formal process of developing a comprehensive supply chain management strategy aimed at the effective, responsive and efficient provision of goods and services required for mandate implementation. The fifth progress report indicates that a vision for supply chain management in field support has now been produced, along with an implementation road map which identifies four interlinked priorities. In the first phase, four short-term activities are envisaged, building on the work carried out in 2013/14 to establish a clearing-house function within the Global Service Centre. These include (a) an analysis of the East Africa corridor to identify opportunities to

improve the movement of supplies in this region, where the port of Mombasa is the main port of entry for sea-freight en route to missions in the region; (b) an improved acquisition planning process; (c) establishment of internal guidance for optimizing the use of international trade terms (INCOTERMS); and (d) implementation of centralized warehousing management based on best practices, to improve the quality and timeliness of recording of warehousing transactions, accuracy of inventory records, product availability, customer satisfaction, resource utilization and effective capacity management (A/69/651, paras. 43-47).

32. The Secretary-General indicates that full implementation of the supply chain management strategy will take place over several years, in phases. In its report (A/65/5 (Vol. II), paras. 318-321) the Board of Auditors noted that substantial delays had been experienced in the planning and implementation of the reforms in supply chain management and stressed the need to develop a plan to ensure mainstreaming of the supply chain reforms into the business processes of the Department of Field Support, the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe and field missions after the conclusion of the global field support strategy. **Given the importance of the initiative as well as the costs of its implementation (see para. 34 below), the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in his next overview report on peacekeeping operations information on the implementation plan of the initiative, including details on its goals, timelines, key activities, milestones and project deliverables, costs and benefits, as well as baseline information and benchmarks for reporting on progress and assessing achievements. The Advisory Committee also emphasizes the need for a centralized approach under the leadership of the Department for Field Support to ensure that all activities being carried out across all missions in relation to the implementation of supply chain management are properly coordinated in the context of the above-mentioned road map (see also A/69/839).**

33. The Advisory Committee requested clarification on the reasons for setting a performance target as low as 51 per cent for the indicator of achievement "Percentage of non-expendable property items held in stock for more than six months" under expected accomplishment "Ageing stock" (A/69/751, table A.3). The Committee was informed that the target of 50 per cent with 5 per cent tolerance rate for this indicator was considered to be reasonable, given that this is a corporate level indicator encompassing all field missions, based on local market conditions and supply chain parameters such as procurement lead times, which exceed the six-month timeframe in some peacekeeping missions. However, it was expected that the implementation of supply chain management would improve performance of field missions in this regard, and the Department of Field Support intended to continuously monitor the performance results of all field missions and review performance targets accordingly. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the key performance indicator for ageing stock and other relevant indicators will be included in the performance management framework for the supply chain management initiative.**

34. In his overview report (A/69/751, paras. 236-240), the Secretary-General indicates that resources required to support the supply chain management initiative undertaken by the Department of Field Support across all field operations amount to some $4 million. A breakdown of the requirements by category of expenditure and mission is provided in tables 14 and 15 of the report. The Advisory Committee

comments on these proposals further in the context of its cross-cutting report on peacekeeping operations (A/69/839), as well as in its reports on the support account for peacekeeping operations and individual budget proposals of relevant missions.

Modularization

35. The Board of Auditors discusses progress on various activities under modularization and enabling capacities (see A/69/5 (Vol. II), paras. 326-337). It notes in particular certain discrepancies between the progress reported and actual achievements, as well as delays in the enabling capacities project. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to expedite the implementation of planned modularization and enabling activities in order to support the rapid deployment of modularized camps. He should also report comprehensively on achievements and outstanding activities in his final performance report on the global field support strategy, along with a plan for the mainstreaming of modularization activities in the processes of the relevant entities.**

36. **In addition, given that uniformed personnel are the main recipients of services provided through modularization activities, the Advisory Committee stresses the need to obtain feedback on the adequacy, quality and timeliness of the modularization services provided, as well as to conduct periodic customer satisfaction surveys and report on results (see also para. 43 below).**

C. Shared services pillar

37. In his fifth progress report the Secretary-General makes two proposals for further development of the shared services pillar beyond 2015: the first relates to the extension of shared services to cover all field missions, and the second to a new approach for the financing of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe (see A/69/651, paras. 21-38). The end-state and performance indicators for the shared services pillar, as well as information on the progress made towards 2015 end-state achievements is provided in the Secretary-General's overview report on peacekeeping operations (A/69/751, annex I, paras. 24-41).

38. The Secretary-General states that, over the course of the five-year implementation period of the global field support strategy, a new service delivery model has been defined and developed which no longer views each field mission as a stand-alone entity, but which prioritizes functional specialization at each level of the Organization, with different entities operating as part of a single field support system, thereby allowing a greater concentration of expertise and consistent service delivery.

39. The previous and new field support service delivery models are depicted in figures I and II of the fifth progress report, respectively. As indicated, the new model comprises four levels of support: (a) field support strategic direction and oversight functions are provided by Headquarters; (b) global operational support functions are provided either by Headquarters or the Global Service Centre; (c) administrative transactional functions, regional information and communications technology services and regional logistics cooperation are provided through shared services, delivered either through shared service centres or structured inter-mission support arrangements; and (d) location dependent services are provided at the

mission level. Figure II provides information on the functions encompassed under each level. Figure III of the fifth progress report provides information on the tools and working methods that have been developed or are being refined to support the new service delivery model.

40. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a table summarizing the support functions performed at each location (Headquarters, Global Service Centre (United Nations Logistics Base), Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, field missions) with an indication of any location-dependent factors, which is attached as annex I to the present report. **The Advisory Committee emphasizes the importance of establishing clear criteria for determining the optimum location from which to provide support functions and/or service lines, including location-dependency factors. The Committee also stresses the need for an effective methodology for assessing the advantages and disadvantages of relocating such functions to shared service centres, which should include a cost-benefit analysis with estimates of the projected initial investment, recurring costs, risk and mitigation factors, as well as information on the expected improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and cost savings, with baseline information and benchmarks for measuring progress.** The Committee has commented extensively on the issue of the relocation of functions from Headquarters or field missions to service centres in earlier reports on the global field support strategy (see A/65/743, paras. 164-168; A/66/718, paras. 235-237; see also para. 67 below).

41. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure alignment between the service delivery model developed for field support and the forthcoming proposals on a new global service delivery model, and also to ensure that the lessons learned during the implementation of the global field support strategy are fully considered and embedded, to the extent possible, in his proposals for a new global service delivery model (see para. 16 above).**

42. In its report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), paras. 338-358), the Board of Auditors notes that the Global Service Centre has not conducted surveys to ascertain client satisfaction ratings, nor does it maintain a log of complaints to help desks. Furthermore, the Centre has not established service level agreements with the missions to which it is providing services or developed operational key performance indicators for its service lines or corporate key performance indicators for shared services. With regard to the Regional Service Centre, the Board notes that two client satisfaction surveys have been conducted, in July 2013 and February 2014, but it questions the validity of the methodology used for analysing the results of the surveys and for computing average satisfaction scores, noting, for instance, that in certain cases responses had been ignored, while in others responses such as "partially satisfied" had been interpreted as a positive score, resulting in the overstatement of the levels of customer satisfaction.

43. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that the provision of remote services must be accompanied by an effective customer relationship management system to track and report on issues/complaints, and that such *reporting* constitutes a key performance indicator for service centres. The Advisory Committee also considers the measurement of client satisfaction levels to be one of the most important indicators in the performance of service centres, which should serve as an important input in decision-making on the operations and**

resourcing of those centres. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to conduct a review of the client survey process and methodology applied in conducting client satisfaction surveys and to put in place systematic, rigorous and objective processes for conducting, analysing and reporting on the results of client satisfaction surveys in a manner that provides assurances as to the integrity of the outcome reported. The Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to ensure that an effective and responsive mechanism is in place to track and follow up on client complaints in a timely fashion. The Advisory Committee also recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to report comprehensively on this matter in his next and final performance report on the implementation of the global field support strategy.

Proposal for a second service centre

44. The Secretary-General proposes the extension of shared services to all field missions. He indicates that this approach helps to support standardized service delivery across missions, provides for business continuity, improves performance oversight and reduces the number of personnel in insecure environments. In his report (A/69/651, para. 23) he outlines the three ways in which services for field missions are being delivered at present in accordance with existing financial rules and regulations, in particular in the areas of (a) regional information and communications technology arrangements; (b) regional logistics cooperation arrangements; and (c) administrative transactional services. The Secretary-General states that administrative transactional services will remain at the core of shared services for field support and continue to be standardized and expanded to ensure that all missions will be supported with consistent and good quality services from off-site locations, in line with the future global service delivery model.

45. The Secretary-General proposes to establish a second shared service centre as a parallel entity to the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe. He develops his proposal in the fifth progress report (A/69/651, paras. 29-32) and proposes two broad options for determining an appropriate location for the new service centre should the General Assembly endorse his proposal to establish a second such centre, as set out below:

(a) The first option envisages building upon an existing United Nations field support infrastructure. The Secretary-General indicates that he assessed existing field support entities against a number of criteria (ibid., para. 35) and identified three viable options: the United Nations Office for West Africa, the Kuwait Joint Support Office, and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi. The progress report (ibid., para. 37) provides some information on the advantages and disadvantages of each of the proposed locations. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a preliminary cost-benefit analysis conducted for each of the three options comparing infrastructure investments, costs of personnel, operational costs and savings, as well as a variety of qualitative factors such as security and stability; infrastructure and facilities; labour and workforce; host country relations; health and quality of life; accessibility; and ease of implementation.

(b) The second option proposed is that a wider analysis of possible alternatives be conducted over the coming year, beyond existing field support

locations, which would include a cost-benefit analysis and expected timelines for implementation, as well as any guidance received from the General Assembly, including guidance relating to the global service delivery model (ibid., para. 38). The results of this review would then be submitted for consideration by the General Assembly at its seventieth session, and a proposal for a second service centre would be prepared on the basis of guidance received from the Assembly.

46. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that experience to date in the provision of shared services has provided some positive results and favours its application to other field missions. The Committee also welcomes the efforts made thus far to identify options for service centre locations and to conduct a preliminary cost-benefit analysis taking into account a variety of quantitative and qualitative factors. The Committee further recalls that the Secretary-General is to present a proposal for a global service delivery model for consideration by the General Assembly at its seventieth session, as well as a detailed report on the implementation of the information and communications technology strategy adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/262. The Committee reiterates the need for a coherent approach to service delivery organization-wide that ensures synergies and sharing of infrastructure to the extent possible, while taking into account the specific requirements of different parts of the Organization, including peacekeeping. The Advisory Committee further stresses the need for cost-effective solutions that maximize savings.**

47. **In view of the foregoing, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to present, in the context of his forthcoming report on the global service delivery model, a comprehensive view of the overall service delivery requirements, including in peacekeeping. In this regard, the Committee emphasizes the need for a clear identification of location-dependent and location-independent functions as well as of business continuity requirements, taking into account the ongoing implementation of Umoja and other enterprise systems which are deployed centrally from the enterprise data centres and will replace the existing local systems that currently provide administrative functions. The Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to build on experience gained in the provision of shared services as a result of the implementation of the global field support strategy, the lessons learned and the work done thus far in this regard, including the Secretary-General's latest proposals. Any proposals presented should be based on a cost-benefit analysis. The Advisory Committee looks forward to receiving the Secretary-General's report on the global service delivery model.**

Financing of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe

48. The current financing mechanism for the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe has been in effect since the outset of the implementation of the global field support strategy, based on the assignment of mission posts and funding contributed from the budgets of participating missions. The Secretary-General proposes that this mechanism be replaced by a new approach modelled on established practice for the United Nations Logistics Base. Under this approach, the budget presented for the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe would be based on an appropriation to a special account to cover staffing, investment and operational costs of the Centre, with the approved appropriation to the Centre being apportioned to the assessment of

contributions for client peacekeeping missions. Further information on the proposal, including on disadvantages of the current arrangements and expected benefits of the proposed solution are provided in the fifth progress report (A/69/651, paras. 26-28).

49. The Secretary-General also indicates that a scaling model will be developed based on workload analysis from experiences with shared service provision to date, and will be presented in detail as the basis of a budget proposal for the Centre for 2016/17. In this connection, the Advisory Committee recalls that the General Assembly, in its resolution 64/269, by which it established the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, stressed that the establishment of a regional service centre must respect the principle of separate financial arrangements for missions and that its resources and the volume of its activities are scalable, reflecting the start-up, expansion, drawdown or closure of the field missions that it serves. This is particularly relevant in the light of the considerable fluctuations in peacekeeping staffing levels seen over recent budget periods.

50. The Advisory Committee sought further details on the above-mentioned scaling model but was not able to obtain sufficient details on the concept or mechanisms envisaged to provide effective scalability. **The Committee points out that the financing model proposed is based on current arrangements for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi which have not proved to be effectively scalable over time, in particular as regards a decrease in resource requirements of the Base during periods of drawdown or closure of field missions.**

51. **While recognizing that the consideration of separate budget and performance reports of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe would have some advantages such as improved visibility and oversight of the Centre's resources, the Advisory Committee is of the view that the Secretary-General's proposal needs further refinement, in particular the development of detailed proposals for a scalability model, which would also be applicable for adjusting the resource requirements of all service providers, including the support account for peacekeeping operations and the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi/Global Service Centre, as well as other service centres. Furthermore, the Advisory Committee is of the view that it will be necessary to present such a proposal for a scalability model for consideration by the General Assembly before, or at the same time as, any proposals regarding changes to the financing arrangements of the Regional Service Centre. The Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to present for consideration by the General Assembly concrete proposals for a scalability model of financing the resource requirements of the support account for peacekeeping operations, the Global Service Centre and the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe. Accordingly, at this stage, the Advisory Committee recommends against establishment of a special account for the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe and the presentation of a separate budget for the Centre. The Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to continue to provide consolidated information on the financial and human resources provided by client missions to the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe for future budget cycles.**

D. Human resources pillar

52. The end-state and performance indicators for the human resources pillar, as well as information on the progress made towards 2015 end-state achievements, are provided in the Secretary-General's overview report on peacekeeping operations (A/69/751, annex I, paras. 10-16). A total of 14 key performance indicators have been defined in the areas of workforce planning, use of rosters, succession planning, improvements to the quality and stability of field staff, and a human resources data framework for reporting. In addition, the Secretary-General indicates that, under the end-state vision, the Field Personnel Division will shift from transactional and process-oriented functions to more strategic functions such as operational workforce planning, strategic advisory services, policy guidance and oversight of the implementation of delegated authorities and responsibilities.

53. In its report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), paras. 293-312) the Board of Auditors recalls that the recruitment and retention of personnel for field services was one of the important areas identified for the human resources pillar in the initial proposals for the global field support strategy, and that particular emphasis was placed on recruiting and retaining female staff so as to ensure improved gender balance at all levels. While acknowledging that initiatives have been taken to increase the representation of women, the Board observes that in 2014 the representation of women across categories was significantly lower than the target prescribed in 12 out of a total of 33 organizational units (departments, offices and missions), and in 14 of 37 organizational units with regard to the representation of women in senior positions (at the P-5 to D-2 levels). The Board also notes that a performance indicator to track the geographical distribution of staff at field missions has not yet been implemented as recommended in its previous report.

54. **The Advisory Committee trusts that the Secretary-General will address the deficiencies noted by the Board of Auditors with regard to the human resources framework. It concurs with the Board's recommendation that action be taken in a time-bound manner to include a performance indicator to track the geographical deployment of staff at field missions.**

E. Regional Service Centre at Entebbe

55. Annex II to the overview report on the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations (A/69/751) provides a summary of the performance of the Regional Service Centre during the 2013/14 financial period, as well as consolidated financial and human resources required for the operation of the Centre in 2015/16, and details on the share of the resources allocated to each client mission as reflected in the budget proposals of the respective missions.

1. Resources for the operations of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe

Budget performance for 2013/14

56. The approved resources for 2013/14 amounted to $39.0 million, financing a total of 332 posts, while expenditure amounted to $25.6 million, reflecting underexpenditure of $13.4 million, or 34.3 per cent (A/69/751, annex II, para. 9, table B.1). The underexpenditure is mainly due to lower than planned requirements under (a) international staff ($3.2 million or 13.1 per cent) owing to a higher

vacancy rate of 15.4 per cent for international staff compared with the budgeted rate of 5 per cent; (b) facilities and infrastructure ($7.1 million or 89.8 per cent) attributable mainly to the non-implementation of the planned construction projects for the Regional Service Centre in the 2013/14 period; (c) information technology ($0.9 million or 59.9 per cent) attributable mainly to the transfer of information technology equipment surplus from UNAMID to the Regional Service Centre; and (d) communications ($0.6 million or 45.6 per cent) owing to reduced requirements for the use of Internet services as well the non-procurement of spare parts.

57. As indicated in the report (A/69/751, annex II, para. 23), a total number of 332 posts (including 169 international posts) were approved for deployment to the Regional Service Centre from the client missions in 2013/14, reflecting an increase of 133 posts from the 199 posts approved for the 2012/13 period, during which a total of 160 posts were deployed to the Centre. The staffing of the Centre is distributed in five service delivery areas: allowance and payments, benefits and entitlements, financial reporting, the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre and the Regional Information and Communications Technology Service posts. An average of 270 posts were encumbered during the period, reflecting actual average vacancy rates of 15.4 per cent for international staff, 20.7 per cent for national General Service staff and 33.3 for United Nations Volunteers. The Secretary-General indicates that during the 2013/14 and 2014/15 periods the Centre has been focused on stabilizing its service delivery model following the implementation of IPSAS and Umoja Foundation.

Proposed requirements for 2015/16

58. The proposed resource requirements for the Regional Service Centre for 2015/16 are estimated at $36.8 million, reflecting a net decrease of $7.4 million, or 16.7 per cent compared with the resources approved for 2014/15. The decrease is mainly due to reduced requirements for (a) international staff ($10.0 million or 39.8 per cent) owing to the proposed net decrease of 69 international posts; and (b) facilities and infrastructure ($5.1 million or 48 per cent) attributable to the completion of the majority of the construction projects by the end of 2014/15. The decreased requirements would be offset in part by increased requirements under (a) national staff ($3.0 million or 98.5 per cent) attributable primarily to the net increase of 68 national posts; and (b) communications ($3.5 million or 244.7 per cent) and information technology ($1.4 million or 6.3 per cent), attributable mainly to the higher requirements for information and communications technology equipment to enable transactional administrative functions in support of 14 regional missions as well as centralized information and communications technology services, including regional business continuity and mobility. A summary of the financial requirements of the Regional Service Centre for the financial period 2015/16 with a breakdown of the contribution of each participating mission and other missions receiving services from the Centre by category of expenditure is provided in table B.10 of the report (A/69/751).

59. The proposed resources for 2015/16 would provide for a total of 386 posts, reflecting a net reduction of 18 posts as compared to 2014/15. The net reduction reflects the combined effect of a net reduction of 69 international posts and 17 United Nations Volunteers positions, offset by an increase of 68 national posts. The net decrease of 69 international posts results from the abolishment of seven Field Service posts and the addition of five P-3 and one P-2 posts, as well as the

nationalization of 68 Field Service posts. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was provided with a table showing the distribution of posts by functional area (administration, finance, human resources, logistics and information technology), with a breakdown by mission and year, which is attached as annex II to the present report.

60. Information on the main resource planning assumptions for 2015/16 is provided in the report (A/69/751, annex II, paras. 26-38). Among the main factors cited is the upcoming implementation of Umoja Extension 1, which will have a significant impact from November 2015 on the service lines for travel, payroll and human resources management for international staff and, from April 2016, on the service lines for the management of national staff, United Nations Volunteers and uniformed personnel. The Secretary-General also indicates that the staffing distribution of the Regional Service Centre was reviewed and is now prorated across all major client missions — UNMISS, MONUSCO, UNAMID, UNISFA and MINUSCA — as well as UNSOA (ibid., annex II, paras. 31-34 and 40-41). Tables B.4 and B.5 of the report show the realignment of posts in the Regional Service Centre in 2015/16 by mission and function.

61. Upon enquiry the Advisory Committee was provided with a table (see annex IV to the present report) showing (a) for the 2014/15 period, the budgeted vacancy rates, the actual rates as at 31 March 2105 and the actual average rates from 1 July 2014 to 31 March 2015; and (b) the proposed vacancy rates for 2015/16, as well as the proposed number of personnel. **The Advisory Committee is of the view that budgeted vacancy rates should be based, as much as possible, on actual vacancy rates. In cases where the proposed budgeted rates differ from the actual rates at the time of the budget preparation, clear justification should be provided in related budget documents for the rates used. In view of the foregoing the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to apply a vacancy rate of 17 per cent for national General Service posts and 50 per cent for national Professional Officer posts in the budgets of the missions that propose separate vacancy rates for their posts that are proposed to be located at the Regional Service Centre in Entebbe. Any related operational costs should be adjusted as appropriate.**

Budget implementation rates

62. Upon enquiry the Advisory Committee was provided with a table showing budget performance rates by year since the inception of the Centre, which is attached as annex III to the present report. The table shows wide variances — both under- and overspending — between the overall budgeted amounts and actual expenditure incurred, due mainly to differences in vacancy rates, delays in construction projects, and information technology and communications requirements.

63. The Advisory Committee was informed, upon enquiry, that the high vacancy rates experienced in 2013/14 for international staff (see para. 56 above) were due in part to the need to divert resources to provide support to missions during the implementation of IPSAS in July 2013 and restriction of recruitment during a restructuring exercise undertaken in January 2014 for the creation of service lines. The Advisory Committee was further informed that the Centre had also experienced high staff turnover rates for international staff during the performance period as a

result of the low rates of post adjustment and of the allowance payable to United Nations Volunteers at Entebbe compared to the missions in the region. **The Advisory Committee recalls that the improvement to staff safety and quality of life was one of the key factors underpinning the initial proposal for the global field support strategy (see para. 14 above), in particular the establishment of service centres in family duty stations. The Committee recommends therefore that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide an analysis of the factors contributing to the vacancy rates for international staff at Entebbe. The Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to review and improve the planning process for estimating the future budgetary requirements of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, including staffing levels and vacancy rates.**

Construction projects

64. As indicated in paragraph 56 above, construction delays have had a significant impact on the budget performance rates of the Centre, resulting in high levels of underexpenditure. The Advisory Committee requested further information on the completion status or actual completion date of the construction of the two office buildings RSC 1 and RSC 2 and the conference centre referred to under expected accomplishment 1.10 (Effective and efficient support to the Regional Service Centre). The Advisory Committee was informed that the contract for design and construction of two office buildings had been extended to the end of January 2015 but that the contractor had failed to complete the project within that timeframe. Furthermore, the contract had expired and was being processed for closure by the Contract Management Section of the Legal Office and the Regional Procurement Office. The conference centre construction project had been put on hold by the Steering Committee of the Regional Service Centre pending further review. **The Advisory Committee recommends that updated information be provided to the General Assembly at the time of its consideration of this matter. The Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide a detailed update on the status of the above-mentioned construction projects and contracts in his next overview report.**

2. Services provided to client missions

Check-in and check-out

65. The indicators of achievement 1.2.2 and 1.2.3 under expected accomplishment 1.2 (Effective and efficient check-in/check-out support to clients) show weak performance for the check-out function for international staff and uniformed personnel: less than 15 per cent of all personnel were checked out within the targeted timeframe of one day for international staff and three days for uniformed personnel. In its report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), paras. 354-359), the Board of Auditors notes that approximately $2.26 million per annum is being incurred in relation to daily subsistence allowance in providing check-in and check-out services, which do not qualify as non-location-dependent services. Furthermore, an additional 11 officers from various missions receiving mission subsistence allowance at a rate of $116 per day are currently facilitating check-in and check-out processes for uniformed personnel at the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe.

66. **The Advisory Committee concurs with the recommendation of the Board that the Secretariat explore mechanisms to provide remote access to onboarding staff at the missions to enable them to complete formalities, thereby obviating the necessity of their visiting the Regional Service Centre, and to report on the additional expenditure incurred on daily/mission subsistence allowance as long as check-in and check-out services are provided from the Centre.**

67. **In this connection, the Advisory Committee is of the view that there is a need to further refine the criteria and process for determining whether functions or service lines can be performed remotely or are fully location-dependent, and to ensure that a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis is performed before the decision is taken to relocate functions to a service centre (see para. 40 above). While it recognizes that in some cases there may be a need to make adjustments in the light of experience, the Committee emphasizes the need for a responsive approach with rapid rectification of anomalous situations, especially when needless costs are being incurred. The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to address this situation as a matter of priority and to ensure that the check-in and check-out functions are performed in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible. The Secretary-General should also be requested to report comprehensively on this matter in his next overview report.**

Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre

68. The indicator of achievement 1.5.1 under expected accomplishment 1.5 (Effective and efficient regional troop movement support to clients), shows that the increase in the number of regional troop movement flights coordinated by the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre was not achieved in 2013/14, and that only 453 troop and police movement flights conducted during the period were coordinated by the Centre instead of the targeted number of 1,179 flights. Table II.20 of the report of the Board of Auditors (A/69/5 (Vol. II)) provides data on the utilization of the two aircraft under the tasking authority of the Centre, showing passenger payload factors of 29 and 53 per cent, significantly below the target of 70 per cent set out in the Aviation Manual.

69. The Advisory Committee requested clarification as to whether the outputs of the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre were affected by the decommissioning of aircraft under its tasking authority and whether assurances could be provided that the Centre would deliver the planned outputs. The Committee was informed that, in the absence of dedicated air assets under its tasking authority, the Centre will plan, coordinate, optimize and execute regional air transportation services utilizing the air assets from the regional missions in order to achieve the outputs planned. The Advisory Committee was further informed that the Department of Field Support had initiated an assessment of the roles and activities of the Air Transport Section within the Logistics Support Division at Headquarters in relation to the Strategic Air Operations Centre at the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi and the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre, with a view to improving overall management of aviation. **The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in his assessment a review of the composition of the services provided by the Transportation and Movements Integrated Control Centre and**

the Strategic Air Operations Centre with a view to consolidating provision of the services centrally and avoiding any duplication. The Advisory Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide an update on the assessment process in his next overview report. The Advisory Committee comments further on the assessment process and air transportation issues in its cross-cutting report on peacekeeping matters (A/69/839) and its report on the proposed budget for the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi (A/69/839/Add.9).

Regional Information and Communications Technology Services

70. The Secretary-General indicates that the Regional Information and Communications Technology Services unit was established in May 2013 at Entebbe with a view to eliminating duplication of effort; achieving economies of scale and scope; and removing disparity of service across missions through standardization. The Secretary-General indicates that the unit provides standard information and communications technology solutions to client missions to enable a mobile workforce and minimize the mission footprint, by centralizing common information and communications technology services.

71. Given the recent establishment of the unit, the results-based frameworks for 2013/14 do not include information on the unit's performance targets and indicators of achievement. The Secretary-General also indicates that the savings in information and communications technology accruing from regional information and communications technology have not yet been reported (A/69/751, annex I, para. 47). **In view of the foregoing the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide, in his final performance report on the implementation of the global field support strategy, further details on the costs and benefits arising from the establishment of the Regional Information and Communications Technology Services unit, including costs for infrastructure such as the technology centre referred to in the report (ibid., annex II, para. 38), as well as information on the related reduction in the resource requirements of the missions served by the unit, including requirements for staffing, contractual personnel, information and communications technology capacities such as data centres, server rooms and help desks. The Committee further recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide in his next report information on the capacities and division of labour among the Regional Information and Communications Technology Services unit, the information and communications technology units of the peacekeeping missions participating in the Regional Service Centre, and the Service for Geospatial, Information and Telecommunications Technologies at the Global Service Centre, as well as on the coordination arrangements between these different providers of information and communications technology services.**

Support framework performance

72. **The performance framework for the 2013/14 period (A/69/751, annex II, paras. 4-8) shows that the performance targets were not achieved or only partially achieved in a large number of cases, which in the Advisory Committee's view is indicative of either poor planning or poor quality of service. While recognizing that the Centre has been involved in the implementation of major business transformation initiatives such as IPSAS and Umoja, the**

Advisory Committee notes that it is already in its fourth year of operation. The Advisory Committee is of the view that there is a need for greater focus on achieving improved performance and quality of service, as well as higher levels of customer satisfaction (see para. 43 above). The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to prioritize improvement of performance and provision of high-quality and timely support services to the client missions of the Centre, and to put into place appropriate mechanisms for assessing progress over time, including clear objectives and baselines.

Support to the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response

73. Upon enquiry the Advisory Committee was informed that, at the request of the Department of Field Support, the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe had deployed an advance team of six staff to provide immediate support for the deployment of the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response (UNMEER) for a six-week period during which the Mission established a capacity to support itself. At the end of the six-week period and after full handover to the local team for mission-specific functions, the Centre had established focal points under the different service lines with a view to providing dedicated capacity for services to UNMEER. The Advisory Committee was also provided with a list of the specific support functions provided by personnel of the Centre to UNMEER, which is attached as annex V to the present report. The Advisory Committee will comment further on this matter in its forthcoming report on the proposed budget for UNMEER.

F. Benefits reporting

74. The overview report provides information on the qualitative benefits achieved in 2013/14 in missions and the financial costs and benefits derived from the implementation of the global field support strategy over its five-year implementation period (A/69/751, annex I, paras. 44-49). The report also provides some information on future projected benefits. **The Advisory Committee welcomes the efforts made to report on the qualitative and quantitative benefits of the global field support strategy.**

75. Table A.5 of the report provides data on the costs, savings and cost reductions attributed to the global field support strategy from 2010 to 2014 by financial period. The net savings and cost reductions reported amount to $424.5 million, reflecting total costs of $19.4 million and total savings of $443.9 million. The table provides a breakdown of the costs incurred at Headquarters, at the Global Service Centre and the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe. The savings realized are grouped under personnel, asset management (strategic deployment stocks reduction and consumption efficiencies) and movement optimization with further breakdowns by category of expenditure.

76. The Advisory Committee notes that most of the savings reported were realized during the 2012/13 financial period. It recalls that in his overview report on the financing of peacekeeping operations for the 2012/13 period (A/66/679) the Secretary-General reported savings of some $370 million arising from the work of the resource efficiency group and a new approach for managing resources under the global field support strategy. In its report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), paras. 287-292) the

Board of Auditors noted that the resource efficiency group had held only two meetings, on 3 May and 11 July 2012. **The Advisory Committee concurs with the recommendation of the Board of Auditors that the resource efficiency group be reconstituted with a clearly defined role and responsibilities complementing the other structures already in place to ensure the regular review of efficiency measures across the field in order to incorporate practical benefits and savings under the global field support strategy.**

77. Information on the qualitative benefits achieved in 2013/14 in missions is presented under the following groups: (a) expediting and streamlining service delivery to field operations; (b) strengthened resource stewardship and accountability; greater efficiencies and economies of scale; (c) staff safety and quality of life improvements; and (d) reduction in environmental impact; utilization of regional/local capacity. The Advisory Committee appreciates the information provided on the qualitative benefits realized by individual missions. In this connection the Advisory Committee recalls that one of the key objectives of the global field support strategy was to improve the quality and timeliness of the services provided to the military, police and civilian components of field missions. As the five-year implementation period of the strategy draws towards a close, the Advisory Committee considers it important to assess the overall improvements achieved in this regard. **The Advisory Committee therefore recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to provide in his final performance report an overall assessment of the improvements achieved in the quality and timeliness by service line across all recipients of those services.**

78. In the overview report (A/69/751, para. 137), the Secretary-General indicates that the long-range passenger airlift initiative has entered its third year and, owing to optimal utilization, achieved cost savings of approximately $6 million in 2013/14, in addition to the savings of about $8 million in the previous financial year. In this connection the Advisory Committee recalls that in its last report it had recommended that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to entrust the Office of Internal Oversight Services with an independent audit of the reported costs and benefits and make the results of that audit available to the Assembly in the next reporting cycle (A/68/782, para. 186). Upon enquiry the Advisory Committee was informed that, pending General Assembly endorsement of that recommendation, the third-party review had not commenced. **The Advisory Committee believes that independent certification of the reported costs and quantitative benefits of the global field support strategy should be provided to the General Assembly. The Committee intends to request the Board of Auditors to conduct such a certification exercise in the context of its audit of the final performance report on the implementation of the global field support strategy including the long-range passenger airlift initiative, and to report on its findings in its next report on United Nations peacekeeping operations.**

G. Governance and project management

79. In his first report, the Secretary-General stated his intention to develop a detailed implementation plan and more elaborate proposals for achieving the objectives of the global field support strategy. However, as noted by the Board of Auditors, the global field support strategy continued for three years of its five-year implementation period without a clearly defined end-state vision or a sufficiently

detailed implementation plan to realize that vision (A/67/5 (Vol. II), paras. 170-171). The Board also pointed to weaknesses in project, risk assessment, benefits and cost management (ibid., paras. 181-200). As indicated in paragraph 5 above, a refined end-state vision for each pillar of the strategy was presented in the context of the fourth progress report, when approximately 18 months remained until the end of the five-year implementation period of the strategy.

80. The Secretary-General set out the governance and project management arrangements for the implementation of the global field support strategy in his second progress report (A/65/643, paras. 4-5). Further details on the governance framework of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe were provided to the Advisory Committee upon request, and were included in the related report of the Advisory Committee (A/65/743, annex IX). The Board of Auditors commented on the project governance arrangements, pointing to weaknesses in a number of areas (A/67/5 (Vol. II), paras. 172-180). In its latest report (A/69/5 (Vol. II), paras. 257-261), the Board of Auditors discussed programme coordination issues, noting in particular that the global field support strategy Steering Committee has not met on a regular basis.

81. **The Advisory Committee believes that effective governance and project management arrangements are essential for the successful implementation on time and within budget of major business transformation and change management initiatives and the achievement of their objectives. It also stresses the importance of establishing at the outset a comprehensive implementation plan which sets out clear goals, timelines, key activities, milestones and project deliverables, with baseline information and benchmarks for reporting on progress and assessing achievements (see A/64/660, para. 159). The Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly request the Secretary-General to include in his final performance report an assessment of the adequacy of the governance and project management arrangements in place during the implementation of the global field support strategy, with a view to identifying lessons learned for the future.**

H. Conclusions and recommendations

82. **Subject to the comments and recommendations made in the present report, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly take note of the progress report of the Secretary-General.**

Annex I

List of support functions by location

Type of function	*Location*	*Location dependency*	*Main functions*
Field support strategic direction and oversight functions	Headquarters	Location dependent (Headquarters)	Strategic direction, operational policy and guidance development, operational standards and systems standardization, new mission planning, oversight and compliance, quality assurance, senior leadership, field capacity-building, field advocacy in policy decisions, Member State interaction
Global operational support functions	Global Service Centre and Headquarters[a]	Location dependent (Headquarters and Global Service Centre)	Global contracts management, global acquisition planning, Field Technology Operations Centre, remote GIS support, strategic deployment stocks/United Nations reserve management, strategic air movement monitoring, Member State operational interactions, uniformed personnel movements, field roster management
Administrative transactional services	Regional Service Centre at Entebbe (and new service centre)	Non-location dependent	Finance and human resource services, transactional, process-oriented and standardized. For functions of field support administrative service centres, see A/69/651, footnote 3
Regional information communications technology services	Regional Service Centre at Entebbe (for Central/East Africa); support for Middle East missions; Global Service Centre — Field Technology Operations Centre	Non-location dependent, but regional proximity highly relevant	Sharing of infrastructure and best practices; ensuring consistency in the development/implementation of standards and service delivery

Type of function	*Location*	*Location dependency*	*Main functions*
Regional logistics cooperation and other activities that may be pooled in support of regional missions	Does not necessarily have a physical structure, the solution may vary depending on the level of integration in the region and the nature of the specific activity	Regionally location dependent	For logistics/supply chain activities these activities would be for improving efficiency and effectiveness through agreement among some missions within a particular geographic region. Examples would include movement coordination and planning, aviation safety etc. For other cooperation activities these might include regional training/ conferencing facilities, pooling of conduct and discipline or other capacities that could be shared part-time among a number of missions
In-mission functions	Missions	Location dependent	Support related advisory services to mission leadership, facilities/ infrastructure development and management, medical and occupational health/safety services, environment management, welfare, compliance risk, audit, in-mission transport, troop/unit rotation, contingent-owned equipment inspection, front-end geospatial and information communications technology solutions and services, United Nations asset management (through life-cycle), provision of life support and other supply items, recruitment, post management, workforce planning, staff advisory functions, training, budget development and execution, trust fund management

[a] Although certain global operational support functions do not in principle need to be conducted from Headquarters, Member States have wanted these functions to remain at Headquarters (e.g. uniformed personnel movements, field roster management, systems contracts management and all activities requiring significant Member State interaction).

Annex II

Regional Service Centre at Entebbe: posts by function, mission and year

	Pool by function						
Mission year	*Initial Regional Service Centre*	*Administration*	*Finance*	*Human resources*	*Logistics*	*Information technology*	*Total*
MINUSCA							
2014/15		4	37	14			55
2015/16			-12	1			-11
Grand total MINUSCA	–	**4**	**25**	**15**	–	–	**44**
MONUSCO							
2011/12	14						14
2012/13			19	19			38
2013/14			32	26	2		60
2014/15						6	6
2015/16		2	-2	7			7
Grand total MONUSCO	**14**	**2**	**49**	**52**	**2**	**6**	**125**
UNAMID							
2011/12	11						11
2012/13			13	26			39
2013/14			28	23	1	4	56
2014/15						6	6
2015/16		-1	-2	-5			-8
Grand total UNAMID	**11**	**-1**	**39**	**44**	**1**	**10**	**104**
UNMISS							
2011/12	14						14
2012/13			38	45			83
2013/14			4	4	1		9
2014/15						2	2
2015/16		-1	-10	-6			-17
Grand total UNMISS	**14**	**-1**	**32**	**43**	**1**	**2**	**91**
UNSOA							
2013/14			5	2		1	8
2014/15						1	1
2015/16			2	2			4
Grand total UNSOA	–	–	7	**4**	–	**2**	**13**

	Pool by function						
Mission/year	*Initial Regional Service Centre*	*Administration*	*Finance*	*Human resources*	*Logistics*	*Information technology*	*Total*
UNISFA							
2014/15 (advance deployment)			2				2
2015/16			4	3			7
Grand total UNISFA	–	–	**6**	**3**	–	–	**9**
Grand total Regional Service Centre at Entebbe	**39**	**4**	**158**	**161**	**4**	**20**	**386**

Abbreviations: MINUSCA, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic; MONUSCO, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; UNAMID, African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur; UNISFA, United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei; UNMISS, United Nations Mission in South Sudan; UNSOA, United Nations Support Office for the African Union Mission in Somalia.

Annex III

Budget execution rates for inception of the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe

			Variance		
Financial year	*Appropriation*	*Expenditure*	*Amount*	*Percentage*	*Reasons for variance*
2011/12	9 334.0	6 119.8	3 220.1	35	Underexpenditure mainly due to delays in establishing contracts for various projects and higher actual vacancy for international and national staff.
2012/13	28 176.0	34 093.4	(5 917.4)	(21)	Increased requirements were mainly due to the unbudgeted construction of the two office buildings and one regional training centre that were planned but not executed in 2011/12 period and unbudgeted support provided for the deployment of information technology solutions in the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe, such as the Field Support Suite, the Customer Relationship Management modules, content management and project management tools.
2013/14	38 960.8	25 595.1	13 365.6	34	Reduced requirements were mainly due to high overall vacancy rates for national and international staff and non-implementation of planned construction projects at the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe due to logistical challenges and delays in procurement processes, resulting in low implementation rates compared to the budgeted.

Annex IV

Actual and proposed vacancy rates

(Percentage of approved strength)

	2013/14[a]		2014/15[b]			2015/16	
Category	*Budgeted*	*Actual*	*Budgeted*	*Actual average 1 July 2014 to 31 March 2015*	*Actual as at 31 March 2015*	*Projected vacancy rates*	*Proposed number of personnel*
International staff	5.0	15.4	5.0	10.0	14.0	5.0	101
National staff							
National Professional Officers	15.0	0.0	5.0	85.0	85.0	15.0	30
National General Service staff	15.0	20.7	5.0	19.0	3.0	15.0	249
United Nations Volunteers	10.0	33.3	5.0	56.0	65.0	2.0	6

[a] National Professional Officers vacancy rate applied: 15 per cent to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan and 0 per cent to the other missions.

[b] National Professional Officers vacancy rate applied: 5 per cent to the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), 2 per cent to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and 0 per cent to the other missions.

Annex V

Support provided by the Regional Service Centre at Entebbe to the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response

A. Regular Regional Service Centre support functions

- Onboarding
- Check-in
- All official travels
- All immediate payments (daily subsistence allowance advance, vendors payment, etc.)
- Initiate business partner profile in Umoja for personnel
- Payroll and management of Progen profiles

B. Immediate administrative and other support functions

Establishing a welcome centre for the purpose of:

- o Registering/checking-in personnel
- o Providing a welcome package with list of accommodations
- o Providing a brief explanation of benefits and entitlements
- o Providing a list of services performed in Accra and contacts

C. Establishing the initial information technology applications that support the administrative processes

- Field Support Suite for check-in and check-out
- Field Support Suite for ePT8 and eF10
- Field Support Suite for eMOP
- Latt-e or iNeed for performance monitoring
- Umoja for payment processes (including a cheque printer)
- Payment system through banking